

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM AMEYBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6034

CONFIDENTIAL LAGOS 8521

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGFBC PFOR, OVIP, NI, PINS, PDIP

SUBJECT: GARBA REQUEST FOR MEETING JULY 30 OR 31 WITH SECRETARY

REF: (A) STATE 184178 (B) LAGOS 8520 (C) LAGOS 8485 (D) LAGOS 8435

1. SUMMARY: PASSED SUBSTANCE REF A TO GARBA JULY 25. HE DID NOT PROVIDE HIS ITINERARY BUT SAID SECRETARY'S DECISION ON MEETING COULD BE RELAYED TO HIM THROUGH AMBASSADOR SANU, WHO WILL KNOW WHERE HE IS. GARBA'S PRINCIPAL INTEREST APPEARS TO BE TO DISCUSS WITH THE SECRETARY CURRENT US TACTICS AND POLICY REGARDING SOUTHERN AND EAST AFRICA. END SUMMARY.

2. GREATLY APPRECIATE QUICK RESPONSE TO REF B. IT IS MOST HELPFUL TO HAVE SOMETHING TO KEEP DIALOGUE GOING AND LET GARBA KNOW HIS REQUEST HAS NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN. CHARGE CALLED AT EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA'S RESIDENCE NOON JULY 25 AND TOLD HIM SUBSTANCE REF A; SUGGESTED THAT IF HE WOULD LET US KNOW WHERE HE WILL BE, DEPARTMENT WILL GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM DIRECTLY THROUGH APPROPRIATE US EMBASSY AFTER HE LEAVES LAGOS. GARBA DID NOT RESPOND REGARDING HIS ITINERARY BUT SAID THE BEST THING WOULD BE TO PASS THE MESSAGE TO HIM THROUGH AMBASSADOR SANU. CHARGE ASKED HOW LONG GARBA PLANNED TO BE AWAY; HE SAID IT WOULD BE ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE DAYS AND HE PLANNED TO STOP IN WASHINGTON ONLY ABOUT 24 HOURS.

3. CHARGE THEN SOUGHT TO EXPLORE WHAT GARBA MEANT BY "BILATERAL ISSUES"; SAID WE HAVE SOME BILATERAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS TRAVEL WITHIN NIGERIA AND THE PROUTY PASSPORT CASE, BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR

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WHAT THE COMMISSIONER HAD IN MIND TO RAISE WITH THE SECRETARY.

A. CHARGE TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS SATISFACTION THAT FSO KOTT IS ABLE TO TRAVEL UP-COUNTRY (REF D) BUT POINTED OUT THIS IS AN EXCEPTION AND THE MISSION'S OVERALL ACTIVITIES ARE BEING SERIOUSLY HAMPERED BY CONTINUING INABILITY TO TRAVEL. GARBA SAID HE WAS KEENLY AWARE OF THIS AND CONCERNED ABOUT IT BECAUSE THERE IS ALWAYS THE QUESTION OF RECIPROCITY, AND HE WOULD NOT LIKE TO BE FACED WITH SITUATION WHERE NIGERIAN STUDENT GOT INTO TROUBLE IN CHICAGO AND AMB SANU COULD NOT GO OUT THERE TO SEE ABOUT IT. GARBA SAID HE HAD BEEN WORKING HARD TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM; IT IS COMPLICATED BY THE INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER AUTHORITIES, BUT THE MATTER WILL BE STRAIGHTENED OUT VERY SOON NOW.

B. CHARGE ALLUDED AGAIN TO PROUTY CASE; GARBA ASKED WHAT IT WAS ABOUT, AND CHARGE GAVE HIM SUBSTANCE OF REF C. CHARGE SAID MEA HAD BEEN WORKING TO SECURE RETURN OF PROUTY'S PASSPORT AND HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL BUT ITS EFFORTS HAD BEEN INEFFECTUAL. CHARGE SAID HE WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL IF COMMISSIONER COULD DO SOMETHING TO BREAK THE MATTER LOOSE. GARBA SEEMED MILDLY CONCERNED AND SAID IF HE HAD KNOWN ABOUT IT EARLIER HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO SOMETHING, BUT HE IS LEAVING TOMORROW. HE THEN SAID HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE.

C. CHARGE THANKED GARBA AND ASKED IF HE HAD MATTERS OF THIS SORT TO RAISE WITH SECRETARY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF BILATERAL ISSUES. GARBA REPLIED VAGUELY THAT AS HE AND THE SECRETARY TALKED TOGETHER HE WAS SURE SOME MATTERS WOULD ARISE. AFTER A MOMENT, GARBA WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE MATTER OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECRETARY'S AFRICAN POLICY WAS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO HIM. HE ALLUDED TO SCHAUFELE AND SCRANTON TRIP, THEIR VISITS TO MUCH THE SAME AFRICAN COUNTRIES, AND SAID HE WANTED TO HAVE AN UP-TO-DATE READING FROM THE SECRETARY.

4. COMMENT: FROM 3.C. ABOVE WE GATHER THAT AS SCHAUFELE/SCRANTON TRIPS NATURALLY BY-PASSED NIGERIA, GARBA IS BEGINNING TO FEEL A LITTLE OUT OF THE ACTION AND IS SEEKING TO REGAIN A POSITION ON THE "INNER COUNCIL", SO TO SPEAK, REGARDING POLICIES, TACTICS AND POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS ON AFRICAN PROBLEMS, PRINCIPALLY THOSE OF SOUTHERN AND EAST

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AFRICA. GIVEN NIGERIA'S IMPORTANCE ON THE AFRICAN SCENE AND FOR THE US, WE HAVE LONG CONSIDERED IT DESIRABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR DIALOGUE WITH FMG, EVEN WHERE OUR POLICIES OR APPROACHES MIGHT DIFFER. THE VERY FACT OF ACCORDING RECOGNITION TO NIGERIA'S STATURE THROUGH SERIOUS SUBSTANTIVE CONSULTATION SHOULD, WE BELIEVE, REPRESENT A POLITICAL PLUS IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THIS TETCHY GOVERNMENT WHOSE BASIC ORIENTATION APPEARS CURRENTLY IN SOMEWHAT FLUID STATE. WE THERE

FORE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IT STRONGLY DESIRABLE FOR THE SECRETARY

TO RECEIVE GARBA JULY 30 OR 31.

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